

Message Text

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63

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

SAM-01 AID-20 EB-11 CIEP-02 TRSE-00 STR-08 OMB-01

CEA-02 COME-00 FRB-02 XMB-07 OPIC-12 LAB-06 SIL-01

FEA-02 SCI-06 INT-08 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

DRC-01 /189 W

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O R 301850Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9769

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 0617

STATE ALSO FOR T/IEP

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, BE

SUBJECT: ENERGY: US VIEWS ON WASHINGTON ENERGY CONFERENCE

REF: STATE 19381

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1. SUMMARY: AMBASSADOR MET LATE AFTERNOON JANUARY 30 WITH FOREIGN MINISTER VAN ELSLANDE AND DIRECTOR GENERAL DAVIGNON TO PRESENT INFORMATION ON ENERGY CONFERENCE CONTAINED IN REFTEL. DAVIGNON SAID IT HAD BEEN BELGIAN UNDERSTANDING, BASED ON PRESIDENT'S INVITATION, THAT CONFERENCE WAS INTENDED TO DISCUSS THE SETTING UP OF AN ENERGY ACTION GROUP. HE SAID BELGIANS TOOK EXCEPTION TO INCLUSION OF OTHER MINISTERS SINCE THAT MIGHT INDICATE THAT WORK HAD BEEN COMPLETED THAT HAD NOT YET BEEN BEGUN. BELGAINS FOUND PARAGRAPH (B)(I) AND PARAGRAPH (B)(II)(A) AGREEABLE BUT HAD PROBLEMS WITH OTHER PORTIONS OF OUR PROPOSED AGENDA. HE THOUGHT THAT ALTHOUGH BELGIAN COULD PROVIDE INTERLOCUTOR FOR THE PRELIMINARY MEETING ON FEBRUARY 8, ATTENDANCE WOULD BE DIFFICULT OWING TO PREVIOUSLY SCHEDULED MEETING OF EC POLITICAL DIRECTORS MEETING OF FEBRUARY 6 - 7 PREPARATORY FOR FEBRUARY 14 MEETING OF FOREIGN MINISTERS. HE ALSO HOPED THAT CONFERENCE ITSELF WOULD END ON TIME SO THAT MINISTERS COULD RETURN FOR FEBRUARY 14 MEETING. DAVIGNON SAID THAT FROM BELGIAN VIEWPOINT, HE WOULD PREFER OUR PRE-CONFERENCE CONSULTATIONS TO BE CONDUCTED WITH HIM IN BRUSSELS RATHER THAN IN WASHINGTON. END SUMMARY.

2. I WAS ABLE TO CONVEY INFORMATION CONTAINED IN REFTEL ON ENERGY CONFERENCE TO FOREIGN MINISTER VAN ELSLANDE, ALONG WITH POLITICAL DIRECTOR GENERAL DAVIGNON, FOREIGN MINISTER'S CHEF DE CABINET NOTERDAEME AND BELGIAN PERMREP TO EC IN THE LATE AFTERNOON JANUARY 30.

3. FOLLOWING MY PRESENTATION, DAVIGNON, WHO DID MOST OF THE TALKING, EXPLAINED THAT THE BELGIANS HAD UNDERSTOOD THAT THE CONFERENCE IN WASHINGTON HAD TO DO WITH THE SETTING UP OF AN ENERGY ACTION GROUP RATHER THAN TO SETTLE ALL THE COMPLICATED PROBLEMS WITH WHICH IT MIGHT HAVE TO DEAL SUBSEQUENTLY. IN FACT THE PRESIDENT'S INVITATION SEEMED TO BE FRAMED IN THESE TERMS. DAVIGNON CONSIDERED IT PROPER FOR THE MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO ENTER INTO POLITICAL DISCUSSIONS ON ALL THE FACETS OF THE ENERGY PROBLEM WHICH WERE SET FORTH BY THE DEPARTMENT IN ITS INSTRUCTIONS AND TO AGREE ON FOLLOW-UP ACTION BY OTHERS.

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4. DAVIGNON THOUGHT THAT, AT THIS STAGE, TO BRING IN OTHER MINISTERS WOULD BE SKIPPING A STEP (SAUTER UNE ETAPE) IN OUR WORK SINCE IT WOULD PRESUPPOSE THAT THERE WAS ALREADY AGREEMENT ON SETTING UP AN ENERGY ACTION GROUP. THE FOREIGN MINISTERS WOULD BE ABLE TO DISCUSS THE STRUCTURE OF FOLLOW-ON ARRANGEMENTS, AND OTHER MINISTERS COULD BE BROUGHT IN IN DUE COURSE. HE SAID THAT WITHIN THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT THERE IS AS YET NO CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF THE MONETARY AND ECONOMIC FACTORS INVOLVED

IN RECENT ENERGY DEVELOPMENTS. THE SITUATION IN THE EC WAS EQUALLY UNCLEAR AND POSITION SUBJECT TO EC DECISION. HE CONSIDERED IT WOULD BE MISLEADING TO ASSUME THAT CONFERENCE WOULD COME UP WITH A COMMUNIQUE DEFINING POSITIONS ON ALL THE TOPICS WE PROPOSED TO DISCUSS. IN SUM, DAVIGNON DID NOT THINK WE SHOULD GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT WORK TO BE DONE HAD ALREADY BEEN DONE.

5. DAVIGNON SAID THAT HE DID NOT WANT US TO THINK THAT THE FRENCH WERE THE ONLY ONES TO HANG BACK. INDEED, HE STILL EXPECTS THE FRENCH WILL BE PRESENT. HE ALSO MENTIONED UNCERTAINTY AT RECENT ROME C-20 MEETING ON EXACT MONETARY IMPLICATIONS OF ENERGY CRISIS AND THE ROLE IMF WOULD PLAY.

6. FOR ALL OF THE ABOVE REASONS, DAVIGNON SAID THAT THE BELGIANS COULD AGREE WITH ITEMS SUGGESTED IN PARA 3(B)(I) AND (II)(A) BUT COULD NOT SEE THEIR WAY CLEAR TO ACCEPT THE REAMINDER OF OUR AGENDA PROPOSAL.

7. TURNING TO PROCEDURAL PROBLEMS, DAVIGNON SAID THAT THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT HAD NO ONE SINGLE INDIVIDUAL EQUIVALENT TO UNDER SECRETARY DONALDSON, BUT THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO SEND ONE OR MORE COMPETENT REPRESENTATIVES TO THE MEETING WHICH WAS PROPOSED FOR FEBRUARY 8. DAVIGNON SAW FEBRUARY 8 AS A MOST INCONVENIENT DATE FOR THE MEETING SINCE THE POLITICAL DIRECTORS OF THE COMMUNITY ARE SCHEDULED TO MEET FEBRUARY 6 AND 7 TO PREPARE FOR THE FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING ON FEBRUARY 14. THESE PREPARATIONS WHICH HAD TO DO WITH EC RELATIONS WITH THE ARAB WORLD AS WELL AS WITH US-EC RELATIONSHIPS WERE OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO THE UNITED STATES, AND FOR THAT REASON, HE THOUGHT THAT THE ONLY TIME FOR MEETING WITH DONALDSON WOULD BE ON FEBRUARY 10. FOR THE SAME REASON HE THOUGHT IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT THE CONFERENCE TERMINATE ON TIME SINCE

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THE MINISTERS WOULD HAVE TO RETURN TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING ON FEBRUARY 14.

8. DAVIGNON EXPRESSED THANKS FOR OUR OFFER TO HOLD PRELIMINARY CONSULATIONS WITH EMBASSIES IN WASHINGTON. HE SAID IT WOULD BE MORE CONVENIENT FOR BELGIANS, HOWEVER, IF OUR EXCHANGES CONTINUED TO TAKE PLACE IN BRUSSELS. STRUSZ-HUPE

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